

**The High Cost of Living.**—A special committee, appointed for the purpose of inquiring into the prices charged for foodstuffs, clothing, food and other necessities of life, and the rates of profit made thereon by dealers and others—popularly known as the “High Cost of Living” Committee,—held its sessions from June 4 to July 5. The report of the committee stated that “scarcity of material and destruction due to war” had partly caused the rise in prices; but, even more, the expansion in currency and credit had caused a general money depreciation, and as values or prices were expressed in terms of money, which was really a quantity of counters, the doubling of the number of counters and the lessening of the quantity of commodities necessarily gave a resultant high price. The closest attention and control by Government agencies over the country’s trade had been a large factor in preventing exceptional rises in certain commodities. Individual cases of high profits were discovered, but these were probably no more numerous or excessive than during peace. Some of the blame for the high cost of living was due to the consumers’ wasteful buying, purchasing by telephone and incurring exorbitant delivery costs. Amongst the remedies proposed was the constitution of a Board of Commerce, which should continue and extend the control which the Government had put into operation during the war. The question of co-operative buying and selling should also be investigated, as the greatest spread, in all lines, occurred in the distribution of products from the manufacturer to the consumer. Over and above all this, the committee reported, the only way for the nation to get back to more normal conditions was by intensive application to productive industry.

**Industrial Unrest.**—During the year the cost of living was almost continuously on the up-grade. Attempts on the part of labour to secure correspondingly increased wages, together with the large number of returned soldiers, who came upon the labour market in naturally a rather unsettled state of mind, produced great industrial unrest. In number and importance the strikes occurring were unparalleled in the industrial history of Canada, as there were in all 298 strikes during the year, involving 138,988 employees and a time loss of 3,942,189 working days, and entailing upon Canadian producers direct and indirect losses estimated at \$100,000,000. During the spring and summer, and more particularly in the months of May and June, the wave of unrest reached its height, but towards the end of the year conditions became more normal, and December showed only seven new strikes and a smaller loss of time through strikes than in December, 1918. The chief events of the year in the labour world, the variations of labour opinion, and the attempts of the Government to harmonize the relations between capital and labour, are outlined, in roughly chronological order, in the following paragraphs.

**Western Interprovincial Labour Conference.**—A conference of labour representatives from the four western provinces met at Calgary, March 13–15, following a conference held in the same city, March 10–12, of the British Columbia Federation of Labour, which